

I CLAIM:

1) A method of monitoring the operability of a light bulb, both while lit and unlit, comprising the steps of:

providing a circuit containing a LED, a relay and a latching circuit portion, said latching circuit portion configured to remain latched thereby applying power to the bulb and the relay only when the bulb is switched on and lit, and said relay having a pair of contacts connected to provide an alternative path of minimal resistance to ground for low voltage applied to an incoming side of the LED, and said relay also having an additional pair of contacts which when closed allow voltage to be applied to the outgoing side of the LED, thereby resulting in the LED lighting when and only when, the light bulb is broken;

electrically connecting to the circuit, the light bulb to be monitored, ignition power, a switched light power control line, and ground.

2) A method as in claim 1 wherein contacts of the relay which are connected to provide an alternative path of minimal resistance to ground for low voltage applied to an incoming side of the LED, are normally closed; and wherein contacts of the relay which are connected which when closed allow voltage to be applied to the outgoing side of the LED, are normally open.

3) A method as in claim 2 wherein the latching portion of the circuit comprises a silicone controlled rectifier having a gate, an anode and a cathode, as well as a trigger circuit portion configured to pulse the gate when the switched light power control line is energized,

and wherein the switched light power control line is connected to the anode and a coil of the relay, and wherein the cathode is connected to one of the normally closed contacts of the relay and to the light bulb.

4) A method as in claim 3 wherein a resistor is provided between an outgoing side of the LED and ground to substantially restrict power from flowing through the LED when an alternative path to ground is available through a filament of the light bulb.

5) A method as in claim 5 wherein multiple circuits are provided for a vehicle on a chip, each circuit lacking a LED, and wherein said chip is connected to a display panel having a top side portion displaying a vehicle shape, said shape having LEDs appropriately positioned thereon so as to correspond to lights on the vehicle.

6) A method as in claim 5 further comprising an audio alarm configured to sound when a LED is lit.

7) A circuit to monitor the operability of a light bulb, both while lit and unlit, comprising:

a LED, a relay and a latching circuit portion, said latching circuit portion configured to remain latched thereby applying power to the bulb and the relay only when the bulb is switched on and lit, and said relay having a pair of contacts connected to provide an alternative path of minimal resistance to ground for low voltage applied to an incoming side

of the LED, and said relay also having an additional pair of contacts which when closed allow voltage to be applied to the outgoing side of the LED, thereby resulting in the LED lighting when and only when, the light bulb is broken.

8) A circuit as in claim 7 wherein the contacts of the relay which are connected to provide an alternative path of minimal resistance to ground for low voltage applied to an incoming side of the LED, are normally closed; and wherein the relay contacts which are connected which when closed allow voltage to be applied to the outgoing side of the LED, are normally open.

9) A circuit as in claim 8 wherein the latching portion of the circuit comprises a silicone controlled rectifier having a gate, an anode and a cathode, as well as a trigger circuit portion configured to pulse the gate when the switched light power control line is energized, and wherein a switched light power control line is connected to the anode and a coil of the relay, and wherein the cathode is connected to one of the normally closed contacts of the relay and to the light bulb.

10) A circuit as in claim 9 wherein a resistor is provided between an outgoing side of the LED and ground to substantially restrict power from flowing through the LED when an alternative path to ground is available through a filament of the light bulb.